

X-92 R.F.E.

## CAPITAL REPORT: EXAMINATION OF—

## Another RFE 'Truth' Message

By FULTON LEWIS, JR.

WASHINGTON, March 24—In further study of the "message of freedom" which Radio Free Europe is beaming behind the Iron Curtain with your truth dollars, I have picked, at random, another script to Czechoslovakia by Mr. Ferdinand Peroutka.

Mr. Peroutka is the great brain in top command of all Czech broadcasts and he himself does a 15-minute stint, each Sunday night, from headquarters in New York City.

The essence of this one is that the Czechoslovakian people are misunderstood by the free Western world, in connection with their recent warm welcome of Nikita Khrushchev when he visited Prague, and a defense of their passive acceptance of communism as their way of life.

He tells them that they cannot hope for any help from the free world, in their dream of liberation, but that, by some gradual evolution and pressure

of public opinion, their communist dictators will be induced into "Revisionism."

"International communism," says Mr. Peroutka, "has been forced to recognize the right to an individual road to socialism."

**EXCEPT FOR** the warning that no help is coming, there is no message of any kind from the free West in the entire quarter-hour spiel.

It is essentially a rationalization of why the Czechs cheered Khrushchev, after Poland and Hungary had revolted against him and other captive peoples—Yugoslavia, Finland and East Germany—greeted his arrival on their soil with massive and icy silence.

In regard to Hungary and Poland, Peroutka says, the revolts were gallant and imaginative, but unsuccessful. In order for revolt to end in victory, he says, it must be timed in perfect synchronization with favorable events in the outside world. Upon this premise, Mr. Peroutka says the following to his Czechoslovak listeners:

**"The gallant Hungarians have certainly, for time being earned more glory than the rational**

Czechoslovaks, but one must admit to one question: who has judged the international situation more accurately?"

The question is obvious sophistry.

What Mr. Peroutka ignores is that the Hungarians undertook a physical revolt, in clear knowledge that they were getting bloodshed and death. They recognized the price to be paid, and paid it many times over.

**THERE WERE** no such considerations in the case of the Czechoslovakian people in Prague in their reception of Khrushchev. Every other country he had visited among the Iron Curtain satellites had received him in icy hauteur.

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So the Czech people in Prague also could have greeted him without fear of any possible reprisal or punishment. There was no penalty of blood, as in the decision of Budapest. But the Czech people cheered.

Mr. Peroutka argues that this was because Khrushchev had de-Stalinized Russia and sent Molotov into exile. The cheers for him were a reproach of their own government.

Mr. Peroutka's Sunday evening "Message of Truth" is, in short, that the Czech people should needle their government into changing from its present form, not toward Western freedom, but toward Khrushchev's communism. Price, one truth dollar per minute, as advertised.

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